

Streamflow Subcommittee
Minutes of 9/4/03 meeting

Attendance: Ralph Abele (by phone), Al Bettencourt, Jim Campbell, Kathy Crawley, Steve Donahue, Alicia Good, Eugenia Marks, Alisa Richardson, Elizabeth Scott, David Wallace, Harold Ward,

1. Meeting was called to order by Alicia Good at 1:15 p.m., and introductions were made.
2. Staffing: Alisa Richardson will be assigned to committee full time. Carlene Newman has another assignment.
3. Approval of Minutes: Minutes of April 30, 2003, and July 23, 2003, were approved. Minutes of August 18, 2003, will be presented at 9/24/03 meeting.
4. Review of draft "Summary of Recommendations":
 - a. Five recommendations have extended to 6.
 - b. After discussion, subcommittee agreed to use "consensus" rather than "unanimous" as description of passage of recommendations.
 - c. Recommendation #2 on RIABF:
 - i. Since the response to public and technical comments has not been completed, this subcommittee's recommendation to full committee will carry instructions that the sentence in Recommendation #2 "The subcommittee recommends RIABF should be further evaluated as an interim streamflow method" is intended to require further analysis for RIABF. In the meantime, USFWS ABF continues to serve as the standard for existing permit review.
 - ii. Substitute language for #2 approved by subcommittee: "As watershed specific standards are being developed, the subcommittee recommends use of an interim standard for new withdrawals and planning purposes. The subcommittee has considered a wide range of alternatives, and has found none substantially superior to the RIABF interim standard proposed by DEM. The subcommittee wants to further evaluate the RIABF as the interim standard.."
 - d. Recommendation #5: Strike the last sentence and substitute "...The subcommittee recommends that a statewide stream gaging network have at least one long-term continuous gage for each 12 digit HUC delineation."
 - e. Recommendation #6
 - i. Objections to use of word "allocate" will be forwarded to full committee.
 - ii. The meaning of "...waters normally with protected minimum flows" was found unclear.
 - iii. Concerns were expressed about the relative values of fish and human use of water.
 - iv. The sub-committee approved by consensus rewording of #6 to read: "The subcommittee recommends that during periods of drought or water emergency, ~~consideration be given to allocate waters normally~~ uses of water, normally with protected minimum flows or levels, be allowed as necessary for essential uses to protect public health and safety and to prevent widespread economic harm, ~~but only in so far as such allocation~~

~~does not permanently impair~~ provided every precaution has been taken to prevent permanent impairment of the biological, chemical, or physical integrity of the water source.

- f. Recommend that #1 and #4 be combined and discussion of new funding for development of methodologies was not accepted.
 - i. Subcommittee agreed that #4 could be reworded.
- 5. Review of draft Report
 - a. Concerns about the report were expressed, and a discussion of the conversion to Rhode Island conditions from the framework of the Connecticut report followed.
 - b. Introduction:
 - i. The subcommittee agreed to delete the first paragraph and the first sentence of the second paragraph.
 - ii. In agreement with using language formerly adopted by the full committee, the words “mission statement” were deleted, and the word “goal was substituted so that the “Introduction” begins: The goal of the subcommittee is “to develop and implement a flow standard that allows for optimum use and encourage sound management practices while being protective of a healthy aquatic ecosystem.”
 - c. Background: Agreed to change “‘new’ science” to “science developed over the last 20 – 25 years” in first paragraph.
 - d. Presentations and Research Discussions: Agreed to list participants in subcommittee and to create an appendix of the list of presentations and experts.
- 6. Recommendations on Priority Uses Subcommittee: DEM will email the Streamflow Subcommittee recommendations, and streamflow subcommittee members are responsible for responding direction to John O’Brien, Chair of Priority Use Subcommittee, by their next meeting on 9/17/03.
- 7. {I may not have said this well but was trying to review the process moving forward. WRB staff will assemble the recommendations for distribution to the full WAPAC. The September (9/25), October (10/23) and November (11/20) meetings will be devoted to more committee presentations and “processing” the recommendations through the WAPAC to take the form of guidance to the Water Resources Board.]
- 8. Next meeting of Streamflow Subcommittee will occur 9/24/03, 9:30 a.m., DEM Room 200 C-1.